



Spotlight on Redevelopment

An Online Newsletter of the Redevelopment Agency of Long Beach, CA

November 2005
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November Calendar

Redevelopment Agency Board Meetings – November 14 and 28, 2005.
9 a.m. City Council Chambers, City Hall, 333 Ocean Blvd., Long Beach.

Agendas for the Redevelopment Agency Board Meetings are posted at: http://www.longbeach.gov/cd/redevelopment/agency_agendas.asp.

Get Involved! Attend a PAC Meeting!

North PAC meeting – 4th Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. Long Beach Police Department, North Substation, 4891 Atlantic Avenue, Long Beach.

Central PAC Meeting – 1st Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m., 241 Cedar St, First Congregational Church, Long Beach.

West PAC Meeting – 2nd Wednesday of the month, 5:30 p.m. 1724 Santa Fe Avenue, Long Beach.

For a more information, please contact the Redevelopment Agency at 562-570-6615.

Meet the Redevelopment Agency Board Members

New Chair of Redevelopment Agency Board, Thomas Fields, Sees Opportunities for Citywide Change

When newly-elected chair of the Redevelopment Agency Board, Thomas Fields, first arrived in Long Beach in the late 1970s, he almost immediately began to make the city a better place to live. Born and raised on the politics of Washington DC, Fields had come of age in the activist 1960s and carried with him a desire to make a difference in his community.

So when he and his wife bought a home in Bixby Knolls, they agreed it was a great neighborhood. However, the dozens of vacancies in commercial buildings up and down Long Beach Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue made it clear it was in desperate need of commercial revitalization. "My wife and I got together with a couple neighbors and said, 'let's do something about this'," says Fields, who'd spent years in top New York advertising agencies.

To find out if others were interested in helping, they put flyers on people's doorsteps inviting them to a meeting in a local coffee house.

"We would have been thrilled if a dozen people came to the meeting," says Fields. "So you can imagine our surprise when more than 200 people showed up!" That

first gathering launched their successful campaign to draw top name businesses to the area. One of their tactics was to start letter-writing campaigns to the presidents of the businesses they wanted to attract, such as Trader Joe's, asking them to consider locating in the neighborhood. "Trader Joe's checked us out but came back with a 'no'," says Fields with a smile. "So we started writing letters again. Eventually we got our Trader Joe's."



*Thomas Fields
Chair, Redevelopment
Agency Board*

Thomas Fields is no stranger to working with the City of Long Beach in an official capacity, as well. In 1992, Fields joined the Economic Development Commission, working on such projects as the Navy Yard Reuse Strategy. He then spent six years on the City's Planning Commission, followed by his appointment to the Redevelopment Agency Board as an at-large member in 2003. Last month he was made chair of the Board.

"Long Beach is in a unique position today to capitalize on our many strengths – the beauty and location of our city, our excellent

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Project Area Focus: North Long Beach

North Long Beach Neighborhood Projects Coming to Life

North Long Beach residents are noticing more than the occasional construction crew working on their streets these days.

As the Redevelopment Agency, along with the Public Works Department and the Department of Parks, Marine and Recreation, lead an extensive street enhancement project in the area, there are lots of other projects underway in North Long Beach that are improving the appearance, accessibility and safety of homes, parks and other public spaces.

The street enhancement project includes replanting of medians at the east and west gateways to the City on Artesia Blvd. and Del Amo Blvd. at the west gateway entrance.

New sidewalks are being added along Del Amo between Daisy Avenue and the Los Angeles River.

In addition to the street improvements, the Redevelopment Agency is partnering with the Neighborhood Services Bureau to provide other neighborhood improvement assistance, including rebates to property owners for home improvement work that has total more than \$2 million of assistance in the last three years.

The Redevelopment Agency has also collaborated with the Neighborhood Services Bureau and the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine to commission a mural on the north

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Fields Looks to Tie City Redevelopment Projects to Job Creation

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schools, talented and committed City officials -- to increase the quality of life for all our residents," says Fields, the father of two grown children. "One way to do that is by tying development projects in Long Beach to job creation. If we help to create jobs for our residents that allow them to support their families, we can begin to alleviate some of the social ills that affect our most vulnerable residents across the City of Long Beach today."

Fields, who runs his own advertising and marketing business, Thomas Fields Associates, believes strongly that collaboration and cooperation are the key to making good decisions as a Board. He also believes that the Board, the City

and the communities have developed a strong working relationship and understanding of each other that will make the coming months exciting and productive.

If Fields could accomplish one thing during his tenure on the Board, it would be to find a way to talk about the redevelopment process so that more people understand why and how the Agency does what it does.

"I believe that if we can help to explain the process and make it more understandable for all of us," says Fields, "more people in the community will get involved. And when more people are involved, it helps us to make the best possible decisions as a Board."

North Long Beach Project Area Benefiting from Enhancement Projects

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side of the 91 Freeway pedestrian tunnel at 67th and Orizaba.

Park construction is also underway in North Long Beach. Construction began last month at Grace Park, located at the corners of Plymouth Street and Elm Avenue. Burton W. Chace Park, at the corner of Market Street and Dairy Avenue was completed this past summer.

Other Redevelopment Agency improvement projects important to the revitalization of North Long Beach are also nearing the implementation stage, including the development of a Village Center on Atlantic Avenue and façade renovations in the historic area along Long Beach Boulevard, an area that will be called Virginia Village.

Next year marks the 10 anniversary of the creation of the North Long Beach Redevelopment Project Area. The Redevelopment Agency and its many City and community partners are planning a yearlong focus on the area to celebrate the successful collaboration between the Agency and the community, highlight upcoming projects and to involve community residents in the many City projects that are underway in the area.



The mural at the 91 Freeway pedestrian tunnel—at 67th Street and Orizaba—will be completed soon. The City and community dedication of the mural will take place on January 7, 2006 at 1:00 p.m.. The public is welcome to attend the event.

Redevelopment Word of the Month

Each month, **SPOTLIGHT ON REDEVELOPMENT** will highlight a word or term that is used regularly in the redevelopment process.

"PROJECT AREA" —

The geographic area in a City which has been designated in the City's redevelopment plan for redevelopment and revitalization.

The Redevelopment Agency of the City of Long Beach was formed in 1961 and since that time has designated seven Project Areas: Central Long Beach, Downtown, Los Altos,

North Long Beach, Poly High, West Beach and West Long Beach Industrial.

Three of these Project Areas are overseen by Project Area Committees (PACs) made up of residents, business owners and property owners. They are West PAC, North PAC and Central PAC.

"Spotlight on Redevelopment" is an online publication of the Redevelopment Agency and is posted each month at <http://rda.longbeach.gov>. For additional information please contact Mary_Nemick@longbeach.gov or 562-570-6316.